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THE CHURCHMAN'S MAGAZINE.

VOL. I.

JUNE, 1821.

No. 6.

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Errors in Religion.

NO. I.

FEW truths are more universally believed in the Christian world, than that the Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, and that nothing can be known concerning the nature of God, or the way of salvation, but what is revealed in the Scriptures. And yet what a diversity of opinions mankind have formed concerning the truths thus revealed!—This diversity appears the more extraordinary, when it is considered that all men profess to derive their religious faith from the Scriptures, and when it is further considered, that of a variety of opinions upon the same point, only one can be correct.

Are men's minds so variously constituted as necessarily to lead to this diversity of sentiment? It should seem not; for in other things we find a pretty general agreement concerning truths which are clearly established. Or are the Scriptures themselves so enigmatical as to admit of this variety of constructions? There are some things in them, indeed, which are "hard to be understood," but with respect to the great points, both of faith and practice, they are clear and evident, so that "he that runs may read."

The main sources of this diversity of sentiment in matters of religion lie, not in the Scriptures, but in men.

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They are the result of prejudices and passions—of education, habits, prepossessions, or natural inclinations and desires.

It is my design, in the present and some future number of the Churchman's Magazine, to notice a few of the most prevalent *Errors in Religion* of the present day—to test them by the unerring standard of the Scriptures; and, where it is practicable, to lay open the sources of the error. Happy shall I be, should I thus become an instrument of turning any from an erroneous faith to the pure truths of the revealed word: Thrice happy, should I be preserved myself from that error which I deplore in others.

Most of the prevalent *Errors in Religion* may be traced to erroneous ideas of the character of the Supreme Being, or to incorrect views concerning the natural state of man, and the means of his restoration to the divine favour. Mistaken views of the character of God, commonly lie at the foundation of all erroneous notions concerning his dispensations towards men, and may properly be adverted to when these errors shall be discussed. A very brief reference therefore to this first source of error, is all that need now be attempted.

God is a Spirit:—This is all that we can know of his nature. His attributes may in part be learned from his works of Creation and Provi-

dence ; but they are most clearly revealed to us in his Word. They embrace all that belongs to absolute perfection, and they exist together in the most perfect harmony. In relation to these, then, the most common error among men, is, *to exalt, and dwell upon one attribute, in such a manner as to degrade or annihilate the rest.*

The *mercy* of God, is goodness extended to the undeserving. It is what we all stand in need of. But how many do we see placing their sole reliance on this attribute, at the expense of the divine character for justice and truth ? They place a careless and unauthorized trust in the mercy of God, and totally disregard the way of salvation which he has revealed, and the rules of life which he has enjoined. They imagine that if they commit none of those great crimes which human laws punish with severity, they have little to fear. They rely solely upon some confused notion of the Divine Mercy. But they ought to consider that the truth and justice of God are as much pledged to punish those who refuse to accept this way of salvation, and to comply with the conditions on which it is proffered, as his mercy is free to save those who embrace it and fulfil its requirements. What say the Scriptures on this subject ? “He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.”—“Hath the Lord spoken, and shall he not do it ?”—“Heaven and earth may pass away, but his word shall not pass away.”

The errors of this class of men are owing in part to unconcern and want of reflection ; but it is a more common cause, that they seek a subterfuge in the *Mercy of God*, because they are determined not to submit to the restraints of religion. But there is another class who have run into an opposite error, from the effect of *Theological System*. If it is an error less fatal to themselves, it is

because it exists more in theory than in practice ; but it is no less derogatory to the character of the Supreme Being.

This class of theologians set out with high and exclusive ideas of the absolute sovereignty, the uncontrollable will, and the entire independency of God. They represent him as moved to act solely by the consideration of his own glory, without any reference or regard to the happiness or misery of his creatures. Thus moved, they represent him as determining from all eternity the apostacy, as well as the creation of our first parents, and imputing the actual guilt of their transgression to all their posterity. From this posterity they represent him as electing a comparatively small portion to eternal felicity, and consigning the remainder to everlasting perdition : Fixing by an eternal, and absolute decree, both the number and the individuals which shall belong to each class ; and that without the least prospective reference to their personal conduct or demerits, but solely on account of his sovereign will ; still inviting, encouraging, and commanding the victims of his condemning decree to return to him, while he is *fully* resolved that they shall not ; and then punishing them for ever for not embracing a salvation which he knew they could not attain, without that grace which he had absolutely determined to withhold.

Were any man thus to determine, and thus to act, so far from attributing to him either wisdom or goodness, we should accuse him of the most cruel mockery, and the most monstrous injustice. It would not be enough that he had *willed* it so ; we should require a *reason* for his conduct. Divine justice only differs from human justice in the perfection with which it is exercised. But if God has thus acted, and if he has so revealed himself to us, we must not ascribe to Him injustice, or any want

of wisdom or goodness, but we must be constrained to confess, that in these dispensations, our imperfect faculties were unable to penetrate the perfection of his ways.—But are these representations of the character of God taken from the Scriptures? Do they not rather seem to be derived from the legends of some dark and gloomy idolatry? Are they not more resembling the offspring of that bloody superstition which has deified a Moloch or a Juggernaut, than they are like the Revelations of our Father which is in heaven?

The fact is, that this representation of the character of God was resorted to as a necessary foundation for a favourite system of Theology; and it is only to be sustained by partial and erroneous views of Scripture. The Scriptures represent the Divine Being as “just and clear when he is judged.” Their general tenor is, that “he is no respecter of persons:” that “he is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish;” but that “the wicked turn from his way and live.”

Some of the points connected with this system of theology may hereafter be commented upon. At present it is only noticed as founded on erroneous views of the character of the Supreme Being, and as an illustration of the proneness which exists among men to exalt, or rather to distort some of the attributes of God in such a manner, as to degrade or annihilate the rest. So far, indeed, are the Scriptures from countenancing these dark and terrible ideas of the character of our Heavenly Father, that if there be any single attribute which they pourtray as excelling and pervading all the rest, it is that of his loving kindness. When Moses brought the Lord to grant him a more full and perfect display of his character and perfections, he was graciously pleased to manifest himself by his most characteristic attributes. Passing before him on the

top of Sinai, he proclaimed himself “the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”—And such he manifests himself to us, not only by the general tenor of his Word, but in his works of Creation and Providence, and in his dispensations of Grace and Redemption.

Still, however, the goodness of God can never be exercised in such a way as to compromise his justice.—All his attributes are equally armed against the impenitent sinner. Let the goodness of God, then, lead us to repentance, and not encourage us in sin; and let all men beware how they insult his justice by “despising the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering.”

C.



The Virtuous Wife.

(Translated from the German.)

WHOSOEVER has gained a virtuous wife, possesses a treasure of intrinsic worth—a prize of higher value than the most costly pearl.

Such a treasure had Rabbi Meir, the great teacher, obtained. He sat, on the Sabbath, in the Synagogue, instructing the people. In the mean time, death, who often aims his poisoned shafts against the youthful breast, and spares the aged and infirm, did, by an unexpected stroke, deprive the parents of two goodly sons; both were of handsome shape—both, by a father's care, enlightened in the law.

His partner looked at first on this bereavement with all the feelings of a tender mother; but, soon her piety shone predominant; and in the duties of the wife, each selfish wish was buried. Anxious to save her husband from those pangs which a too sudden knowledge of his loss might raise, she moved the bodies of her sons into her chamber—laid them on

her bed, and with white drapery concealed them.

In the evening Rabbi Meir returned, who, with a father's fond solicitude, enquired, "where are my sons, that I may give to them the blessing?"

"They are gone into the synagogue," replied his wife.

"I looked around while there, in expectation of their coming, but saw them not," replied the Rabbi.

She reached him a goblet with wine—he praised the Lord at the ending of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, "where are my sons, that they may also drink and partake of the blessing?"

"They are not far," she said; and wishing to change the object of his thoughts, with ready hand prepared their evening meal. Of this he did partake, and after giving thanks, his wife thus spoke: "Rabbi, permit me to ask your judgment in a cause which much concerns me. A few years since a person gave unto my care some jewels;—these I received with pleasure, watched their safety with an anxious mind, contemplated with pride their worth, and dared, at length, to view them as my own—when, in an unexpected hour, a messenger is sent in his master's name, and claims my valued charge: shall I restore these gems to him?"

"My wife ought not first to enquire this," said Rabbi Meir; "wilt thou delay returning to the owner each one that he hath lent thee?"

"Oh no," answered she; "it is unjust so to do;—but I would not return them without thy knowledge."

She then conducted him to the chamber—walked forward, and removed from the dead bodies their covering. "O my sons! my sons!" cried the father, in the fulness of his grief—"do I find you thus? I gave you life, I enlightened your mental eyes in the law, and looked upon you as the solace of my declining

years—when, on a sudden, I find myself bereaved of you."

She turned from, wishing to conceal the agitation of her mind, but roused at length by the violence of his grief, she seized him by the hand, and spoke—

"Rabbi, hast thou not taught me that it is contrary to the religious as well as moral duties of men, to refuse restoring what is entrusted to their care? Behold the Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

"The name of the Lord be praised," joined Rabbi Meir, conscious he had erred in repining at His will, who is infallible; in murmuring at His mandate, who is omniscient.

It is truly said, "whosoever hath found a virtuous wife, has a treasure greater than the most costly pearl; she opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness."



On Matthew vii. 24—27.

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock, &c.

IT was the object of our Saviour in his admirable discourse on the Mount, "to explain in some degree, the nature of his religion, the duties it enjoins, and the dispositions it requires. It clearly traces out to us the great outlines of duty; it gives us general principles and comprehensive rules, which we may ourselves apply to particular cases, and to all the various situations in which we may be placed." Perhaps there is no duty which we owe to God, to our fellow creatures, or to ourselves—nothing relating to our dispositions and actions through life, for which we may not find an appropriate general maxim.

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ral principles and comprehensive rules of morality, that our Lord gave us the beautiful similitude with which he concludes the discourse. In the several preceding verses, he acquainted his disciples with the most important fact, that a knowledge and belief of religion, without a correspondent life, could not recommend them to the favour and acceptance of God. A belief in the doctrines of the Gospel, zeal in proclaiming its glad tidings to others, and even the power of working miracles, would be wholly unavailing in respect of their justification, were not its efficacy manifested in its effects on their temper and conduct. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven; many will say unto me in that day, (the great day of account,) Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? Then will I profess unto them I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Whatever may be our knowledge and faith, even if we have prophesied and done many wonderful works;—all will be entirely unavailing, if we have not done the will of our heavenly Father. On the day of account, we must experience the horror of that dreadful declaration, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Terrible declaration! Depart from me!—"from Jesus whom thou hast believed, and in union with whom alone eternal life is to be found; for united to Christ, all is heaven;—separated from him, all is hell!"

"Therefore," saith our Saviour, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock," against which the winds and floods beat in vain. "And every one that heareth these

sayings, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand," which was soon destroyed by the winds and the floods. This similitude is probably founded upon a fact of very frequent occurrence in all countries, situated near the tropics. In those countries, the rain falls in such torrents as sometimes to sweep away even whole villages; the houses being built of brick dried in the sun, literally melt away before the rain, or are undermined and destroyed by the floods which they create. The wise and the prudent would therefore erect their houses in such places, and on such foundations, as would be most likely to withstand the wind and the storm; while the thoughtless and inconsiderate would erect them without any regard to safety or durability. They who hear Christ's sayings, and do them, are compared to the wise and prudent. They build their faith and hopes, on the only sure foundation Jesus Christ. They follow with exactness and diligence the maxims of his Gospel, and endeavour, by the influence of his Spirit, to conform their temper and conduct to its letter and spirit. But they who hear them, and do them not, are compared to the thoughtless and inconsiderate.—They seek not to build up their faith and hopes on that foundation that is laid, which is Jesus Christ; and disregarding the precepts of his Gospel, they are at no pains to render their affections and their conduct conformable to his will. While therefore the former remain unmoved and uninjured, amidst the storms and tempests of the world, one of the latter character finds too late the instability of his hopes, the fabric to which he looked for security, unable to withstand the winds and the floods, is undermined and falls to the ground, "and his soul sinks with its ruins into the nethermost pit." While he is occupied with the cares and busi-

ness of life, or mingling with fond delight in the gay and fashionable amusements and pleasures of the world, or pursuing with eager desire, honour and popular applause; while life rolls on in a calm and even course, no adversity awakening him to a sense of his danger, and trying the stability of his hopes, while the sun of prosperity beams its gilded, dazzling rays—his breast may perhaps be peaceful and tranquil, because he finds no leisure from the fascinations which chain his mind, for serious and religious reflections. This scene, so delightful and enchanting to the carnal mind, will not always continue. Calm as the current of life now is, the storm is perhaps already gathering which will ruffle and disturb it. Sooner or later, the disappointments, the troubles and sorrows of the world, will overtake him, will awaken him to a sense of his danger and folly, will dispel the false peace and security in which he had reposed, will acquaint him in that hour when he will feel it most, with the instability and emptiness of his hopes, and he will be left comfortless and without support, to experience the displeasure of his God.

The words *flood, winds, and rain*, in this passage, denote those dispensations of Divine Providence, which operate as tests of the religious sincerity and integrity of our hearts and of our professions,—those dispensations, which try the firmness of our hopes, and which decide whether they are built up by conformity of the heart and life to the word and spirit of the Gospel, on the only “sure foundation, which is Christ.” We may consider them as denoting the various temptations with which God in his Providence permits us to be assaulted—the various disappointments, and troubles, and afflictions which he dispenses—the approach of the dark hour of nature’s gloom, and those interpositions of his grace, by which all become possess-

ed of a realizing sense of the awful transactions of the day of final retribution. Generally speaking, these things will acquaint us, and indeed the world, with the real state of our souls, with the sincerity of our professions, and with the strength of that foundation on which we have built our hopes.

This passage teaches, therefore, not only the importance of steadfast and faithful obedience to the precepts of the Gospel, but that there is in reality a wide and awful difference between him, whose faith is accompanied with conscientious obedience to all the commandments of God, and him, who places his confidence in a mere speculative belief, in an outward profession of Christianity, which leaves no traces of its efficacy on the affections of his soul, and the conduct of his life. O. T. B.



On Religious Dissipation.

To the Editors of the Churchman's Magazine.

ST. PAUL, in his second Epistle to Timothy, speaks of those, who “are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”—And he says that “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables.” It appears to me, that the Apostle has described in these words the character of many Christians of the present day. I know that he had an immediate reference to a different age, and a different body of Christians. But they have often occurred to me with considerable force as applicable to those Christians, who, instead of studying the word of God, and observing the regular and authorized administrations of the Gospel, are incessantly running from

one religious meeting, and from one denomination to another; and in this way, *after their own lusts, heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears*, becoming averse, if not opposed, to sound doctrine, and turning from the truth of God unto fables. Nothing can be more perplexing to the mind than this practice. Persons of this description are ever learning indeed, but no religious principles become fixed and stable in their minds, and they are never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. Their minds become confused and distracted with various systems of doctrine and modes of worship, and their course commonly terminates in embracing error and schism, or rejecting all religion.

From whatever motives this practice may arise, it is dangerous and pernicious. By it they think that they shall be "in the way of getting religion," as they term it. But this species of religious dissipation, unfits the mind for receiving religion in its purity and simplicity, and exposes them to all the errors and delusions of fanaticism on the one hand, and of heresy on the other. It prevents that self-communion, so necessary to the growth, and I may say to the very existence of the spiritual and divine life. It affords no leisure for that humble and retired devotion and meditation, without which religious truth can never be fixed in the mind, nor the heart established in holiness. These observations have been suggested by reading the observations of the Rev. Dr. Millar, in a sermon delivered the last year in Baltimore, on the love of variety and fondness for religious dissipation. The paragraph in which they are contained I have extracted for insertion in the Magazine, hoping that they may have a salutary influence on such members of our communion, as may be actuated by this desire of novelty, and fondness for religious dissipation.

"But this desire may be, and often has been indulged to excess; especially by parents and heads of families. Many hasten from Church, and from one social meeting to another, until every hour on the Sabbath and every evening in the week, are employed in public services. In fact, they seem to think that they serve God acceptably, just in proportion to the number of public exercises on which they can attend. This religious dissipation, for it really appears to me to deserve no better name, is productive of multiplied evils. It interferes almost entirely with that calm self-examination and self-converse, which are so essential to a life of growing piety. It abridges or prevents in a most fatal degree, that faithful instruction of children and servants, which is indispensable to have a family brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And it tends to surcharge the mind with an amount of spiritual provision which is never properly digested, or likely to be advantageously applied. The consequence is, that the young and rising generation in such families, are never prepared by adequate training at home, to hear the Gospel with profit; while those who are more advanced in life, taking little or no time for meditation and reading in private, do not grow as they ought in scriptural knowledge, and remain but babes, while they ought to be strong men in Christ."

L—S.



For the Churchman's Magazine.

On the true ground of the Christian's Rejoicing.

THERE are few subjects more imperfectly understood by the great body of Christians, than the character of that peculiar frame of mind, which is a necessary qualification for the possession and enjoyment of the hap-

piness afforded by the Gospel. This subject, plain and practical in its nature, and encouraging and consoling in its tendency, is, if I am not mistaken, adapted to the comprehension of every disciple of our blessed Master. It would not be difficult to point out the causes which have embarrassed this subject, and contributed so much to that imperfect knowledge of it, which is so general.—But it is unnecessary, and might perhaps be deemed invidious and illiberal. No exceptions, however, can be taken to the remark—that these causes operate through our natural blindness, erroneous views of christian doctrine and experience, and the manner in which that doctrine and experience are often illustrated.

The following passage of Scripture furnishes us with a key to this interesting subject. It not only presents it to the understanding in its proper light, disclosing its true nature and tendency; but it enables us to remove the difficulties with which it has been embarrassed. “Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have our conversation in the world.” The doctrine here asserted, is this, that the clear, unbiassed, and positive testimony of conscience, that in simplicity and sincerity, with proper principles, views, and motives, men sustain, by the influences of divine grace, the character which God requires of them in the various scenes of life, is the only ground on which Christians may rejoice in the possession of those comforts which are promised in the Gospel.

The error opposed to this doctrine, is that which makes the emotion created by sympathy, the mechanical excitement of the animal feelings, fancied instantaneous and irresistible operations of the divine spirit, a mere speculative attach-

ment to religious doctrines and institutions, and a sudden conversion by what is alleged to be the omnipotent grace of God without regard to its effects on the temper and conduct; the ground of rejoicing and the testimony of our title to the comforts which are promised in the Gospel to the faithful disciples of our divine Master. But our feelings and passions are so delusive, and so often excited by mere animal sympathy; our heart is so deceitful, and desperately wicked, and the temptations of our adversary are so various, and presented with such consummate art, that we cannot safely trust to this ground of rejoicing in the consolations of the Gospel. When the possession of them is placed on this ground, the adversary of our spirits, clothed perhaps as an angel of light, may be seducing us, by this very excitement of our feelings and passions, from the path of true religion.—Tranquilizing our conscience by the *delusive*, but *flattering* emotions of our breast, he may be leading us on, imperceptibly to ourselves and perhaps to others, in the road to destruction. Throughout all our frame we may discover evident traces of the wisdom and goodness of our Creator. To enable us to avoid every species of delusion, as well as to judge of our actions, he has formed in us a power, or faculty, whose peculiar province it is, to decide upon the rectitude of our motives of action, and the religious state and character which qualifies us for receiving the approbation of God, and those spiritual satisfactions which he has promised. Conscience is the power, or faculty to which I allude, and the proper subject of its exercise, is our motives of action, our principles and our conduct; and the consequence of its exercise to the pious and holy Christian, is peace and happiness of mind, free from the illusions of fancy, and independent of

the sudden emotions often produced by the excitement of our animal sympathies.

"The exercise of this faculty, is attended with peculiar feelings, when we ourselves are the agents. We are then too deeply interested to view the subject as a mere matter of reasoning. Pleasure and pain are always excited with a degree of intensity, proportioned to the importance which we assign to our own interests and feelings. When we judge of others, our approbation, or disapprobation, is generally qualified, and sometimes suspended by our ignorance of the motives, by which they may have been influenced.— But in our own case the motives and the actions are both before us, and when they are not right, we feel the same disgust with ourselves that we should feel towards another, whose motives we knew to be wrong. But in our own case, the uneasy feeling is increased in a tenfold degree, because self-contempt and disgust are brought into competition with the warmest self-love, and the strongest desire of self-approbation. We have then, under these circumstances, something of the feelings of a parent, who knows the worthlessness of the child he loves, and contemplates with horror the shame and misery which might arise from exposure to the world. Our Creator has furnished us with infallible principles of judging concerning right and wrong.— When we see a person acting in opposition to these principles, or violating that order of things which God has evidently appointed, we are compelled to pronounce that he is acting wrong. Were our knowledge of the order and constitution of things perfect, we should need no other rule of duty; but should be led with infallible certainty to that line of conduct most conducive to individual and public happiness. This, however, is far from being the case, and the reason of it is, that our feel-

ings are irregular and complex, and the designs of Providence are not always readily perceived."

Conscience derives its chief and most salutary influence, from the consideration that we are continually in the presence of God, and accountable to him for our thoughts and actions. An enlightened conscience, is the best security of virtue, and its decisions the surest ground of our consolation in the Gospel, and the most awful avenger of wickedness. This faculty of conscience, this arbiter of good and evil, pronounces a sentence upon our conduct which we may rely upon as true and just, and which God will approve. "If our conscience condemns us not, then have we confidence towards God." Perhaps no person was ever guilty of an action decidedly wrong, without feeling a painful sense of his guilt, and the force of a condemning conscience. If her voice be not repressed, by any delusion, she will force upon the mind a conviction of the wrong that we have done, and point our fears to the displeasure of God, and to the punishment which that wrong merits at his hands.

On the other hand, when our motives and conduct correspond with his will, the judgment of our conscience tranquilizes the mind by a sentence of approbation, and points our hopes with a measure of assurance to the favour and acceptance of God, and to the rewards which he has promised unto them who shall be obedient to his word. It was this judgment or testimony of his conscience which afforded the Apostle ground of rejoicing in the Gospel. What then was the testimony which he received? It was, that in simplicity and sincerity, not with carnal wisdom, but through the assistance of divine grace, he had acted in his public and private capacity conformably to the will of Christ; and the the testimony of conscience to this

fact afforded him joy and comfort ; that satisfaction of mind, which belongs only to the true disciples of the blessed Jesus.

The ground of the Apostle's rejoicing was not the pride of extraction, the distinctions of office, and the possessions of the world ; was not the self-righteousness of the Pharisee, or the apathy of a stoical philosophy ; was not the fervour of mere animal feeling, or the raptures and delusions of fanaticism. No—these were not objects on which he dwelt with pleasure and satisfaction, nor were they the sources of his comfort and happiness. But the ground of his rejoicing was the testimony of conscience to a matter of fact, and that fact of the greatest importance. It was this, that in mingling with the world as a man, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, he had forsaken the paths of sin ; and with that simplicity and sincerity of heart which proceedeth from the fear of God, and with submission to the directing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, he had conformed himself to the will and law of Christ, and had walked in the ways of piety and godliness.

It was this testimony of conscience which, through the blessing of divine grace, rendered the breast of the Apostle peaceful and tranquil, which afforded him joy and comfort in the various scenes of his trial and suffering, and enabled him to look forward into the world of spirits, with confidence that he should there inherit a crown of immortal felicity and glory. It was this clear and decided conviction and assurance of his mind, that his motives, actions, feelings and affections, were such as to entitle him to a lively interest in the Gospel, which filled his breast with joy and peace.

This is the only true ground on which we can hope to enjoy the real consolations of religion, and on which Christ can be in us the hope of glo-

ry. But there are many who rejoice on other grounds, and who arrive at the sources of their comfort as Christians, in other ways. It is too often the fact, that professedly experimental Christians rejoice in the religion of the Gospel, merely because a certain tone has been given to their natural feelings and affections, because powerful emotions have been excited in their breast on the infinitely interesting concerns of religion, or because they have imbibed the persuasion that they have a peculiar interest in God's sovereign pleasure and predestination, confirmed by a belief that they have been born again by the operations of irresistible grace, and perpetuated by assurances that, having experienced these operations, they cannot fail to obtain eternal blessedness. Did St. Paul rejoice on these grounds ? or are we directed in any sense to look upon these things as the proper sources of christian enjoyment ? or is there any intimation in the word of God, that these are to be regarded as the proper grounds of spiritual joy and satisfaction ? It is not from them, that the Christian is taught that he must derive that comfort, which he is to regard as the temporal recompense of his allegiance to his Master and only Saviour, and as the enjoyment which is designed to give him a foretaste of the happiness prepared for him in heaven. The comfort which Christianity promises must be founded in the testimony of conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, by the grace of God he has had his conversation in the world. The only criterion in this case is the clear judgment of conscience, directed by the precepts of the Gospel, concerning our spiritual state and character. The decision of conscience on this subject, must be formed, not by a reference to our feelings which are fallible, nor to the sovereignty of God, the effects of which on our moral and religious character, if they in

fact exist, are perfectly inscrutable ; but by a reference to our actions as correspondent by the grace of God, or as opposed through our perverseness, to the divine will. This is properly a decision on the fruits manifested in our course of life, which is perfectly in the power and the appropriate office of the conscience of every one. If in our course of life we bring forth the fruits of the spirit, which "are in all righteousness, goodness and truth"—if our conscience bear witness to this, ascribing it to the influences of divine grace, it is a proper ground of religious joy, it is an evidence which may be relied upon that our heart is right with God, and it creates in the breast a peace and tranquility, which one would not exchange in moments of deliberate reflection, much less in the hour of death, for the possession of worlds. It is a humiliating reflection that thousands who profess to be genuine disciples of our blessed Master, and to experience the happiness afforded by the Gospel, were they to try their frame of mind, their motives of action, and their religious character, at the tribunal of a conscience whose decisions should be controlled by the precepts of the Gospel, would find that they have cause for the deepest abasement and remorse, and that their hearts and their lives must be essentially changed before they can be partakers of the real and genuine comfort and happiness promised in the Gospel. Mankind are too apt to place their religion in mere outward appearances, or in a peculiar state of feeling, perhaps the offspring of error, delusion and fanaticism, and to make this the ground of their rejoicing in God their Saviour. This however is illusive and dangerous. There can be no sure and safe ground of their rejoicing, but the testimony of their conscience, that their faith, their moral and religious character, comports with the word of God.—

This testimony cannot be erroneous, when it is given it is given in reference to the cognizance of the Almighty, and with a recollection that we are accountable to him for all our thoughts and actions.

The Christian, who lives without this testimony of conscience, is in an awful condition. He is destitute of those qualifications which are required in the Gospel, and without which there can be no real experience of the comforts of our holy religion. The testimony of his conscience is, that his frame of mind and his character preclude him from this most pure and elevated of all enjoyments. He has no assurance of the divine approbation on which he may repose with safety ; he has no well founded hopes to cheer his prospect in the world beyond the grave, and he has no evidence of that union with Christ, from which he might expect admission to the realms of light and glory. B. Y.



For the Churchman's Magazine.

*The Inspiration of the Scriptures
proved from their internal Evidence.*

It cannot have escaped the most superficial observer, that to bring the Scriptures into disrepute, Deists have left no means untried. To compass their purpose, they scruple not to charge the writings of the Old and New Testaments with gross imposture ; with wild enthusiasm ; with flagrant absurdities ; with self-contradiction, and the like. Nay, the very shafts of ridicule have been employed to vilify religion and its professors. How justly these aspersions are used to blacken their reputation, will, I hope, afterwards appear.—But, let us for a moment suppose, that Deists have accomplished their wish ; that they have, with resistless evidence, proved Christianity

a system of priestcraft ; that they have freed the human mind from the shackles of bigotry, and given it full liberty for the most active exertions ; that they have reinstated degraded reason in her primitive dominion and glory. But let us go a little farther. We might now address them—" You have demonstrated the religion of the cross to be an infamous cheat ; what religion do you propose to substitute in its stead ?" The question is startling and puzzling ; doubtless, they would answer, the religion of Nature. But what religion is that ; what its fundamental principles ? These are said to be, the belief in the being and perfections of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments ; and from these principles, all the duties of man are supposed to flow. But when was the time, where was the place, in which this religion was practised ? And who were the people that practised it ? And if this be the true religion, why attack the Gospel ?—These principles are no where so clearly set forth, or enforced with such powerful arguments, as in the sacred volume. If therefore the Gospel be false, the religion of Nature must be so too ; for they are built upon the same foundation, and no man in his senses can avoid seeing, that the ruin of the former necessarily involves the ruin of the latter. So that it is incumbent on Deists to find out a third religion more rational than the latter.

But the enemies of religion are not themselves agreed in their opinions respecting it. Some reprobate it altogether ; others, more moderate, acknowledge it an excellent political institution, and admirably adapted to promote the happiness of civil society. They therefore treat it with external reverence ; while, at the same time, they endeavour secretly to overthrow its authenticity, and infuse

their poisonous tenets into the minds of the young and ignorant.

It may perhaps be said, that these observations are foreign to the present purpose. But, although they may not fall *immediately* within our design, yet the conclusion we draw from them is this—if, at the first, we can fasten a notorious absurdity upon Deism ; if we can prove the conduct it inspires, repugnant to the character of good men ; if we can prove Deists inconsistent with themselves ; it may reasonably be expected that our future remarks will be considerably strengthened.

Having made these previous reflections, we proceed to the subject under consideration, and for this purpose shall examine the MAJESTY, PURITY, HARMONY, and SCOPE of the Sacred Writings.

By the term *majesty*, I mean all that grandeur which we find in the Sacred Writings, whether relating to the objects therein mentioned, or to the manner of describing those objects. On this head, let us confine our attention to the *relations* which are given of God ; offering, at the same time, some *examples* to prove the superior advantages of the Scripture style.

It is well known that even the wisest of the heathen entertained gross and unworthy ideas of God. But in the inspired writings, we are informed of his nature and perfections in a manner too glorious and exalted, to be within the reach of unassisted reason. Not an unworthy idea is there suggested of God. He is, on the contrary, represented to us as but ONE—"hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is ONE Lord :—" AS A SPIRIT—"God is a Spirit :—" AS BLESSED IN HIMSELF—"the blessed God :—" AS OMNIPOTENT—"I am the Almighty God :—" AS ETERNAL—"the Eternal God is thy refuge :—" AS INFINITE in his being—"I am that I am :—" AS UNCHANGEABLE—"I am

the Lord; I change not:" As INCOMPREHENSIBLE—"canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" As OMNIPRESENT—"whither shall I go from thy spirit; or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" As OMNISCIENT—"all things are naked and bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do:" As MOST WISE—"God only wise:" As MOST HOLY—"O Lord, thou only art holy:" As MOST JUST—"his work is perfect, his ways are judgment:" As MOST MERCIFUL—"the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."

Now all these perfections taken together, constitute God's majesty, glory, or infinite excellency. And when we have such a view of him, may we not exclaim with the prophet—"to whom will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare with him?" Shall we compare him to the Chinese Fo? to the immoveable principle of Zeno? or, to the air of ANAXAMINES? Shall we compare him to the heathen Jove; to Jove, who had his equals; to Jove, whose scandalous impurities would make even a man of common modesty blush; to Jove, who could not reverse the sentence of any other Deity?

Here let it be observed, that although reason can neither comprehend some, nor discover other of the divine perfections, yet none of them are contrary to reason; nay, all of them may be defended at her bar.

To conclude this branch of the subject: who does not perceive the inexpressible majesty of God in the atonement, which the Scripture informs us was exacted for sin? He gave a law to his rational creatures; they broke it, and trampled his august authority under their feet. His insulted honour cried aloud for vengeance, and demanded the blood of the offenders. The sword of justice

is drawn, and pointed at their hearts. Is there no remedy? Lo! the Eternal Son interposes; but not even He could save without making satisfaction. Hear the irreversible decree of the Supreme:—"Awake, O sword of the Lord; awake against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

Let us now pass on to some brief illustrations of the majesty of Scripture style. Here, it may not be improper to premise,

First—That it was not necessary that all parts of Scripture should be written in an elevated style. For, no one who has the least pretension to judge of composition, can possibly be so ignorant, as not to know, that one of the most signal beauties and greatest arts of writing consists in adapting the style to the subject. None therefore but the inexperienced would attempt to clothe a plain history in all the trappings of rhetoric, or to work up a simple narration into the sublime. How ungenerous then, nay, how stupid to censure a writer for not using a style, which the nature of his subject absolutely precluded! Had the inspired penmen acted such a part, Deists would have justly despised them for their affectation. If the Commentaries of Cæsar deserve the high encomiums which have always been passed upon them, surely the noble simplicity of Scripture narrations is justly entitled to our admiration. These observations, if allowed their due weight, remove the cavils which are made at the historical parts of Scripture.

Secondly—That we should carefully distinguish between Scripture itself, and what is recorded in Scripture. It would be the height of absurdity to suppose, that people of vulgar education and manners should speak in an elegant style; and such are often necessarily introduced in Scripture, as witnesses of facts, &c.

Thirdly—That the Scriptures suffer greatly from translations. Perhaps the far greater part of those who accuse the Scripture style as mean and vulgar, take their exceptions from translations, which scarcely ever convey the beauty and force of the original.

Fourthly—That there are many sublime passages in different writers, which cannot be compared with the Scriptures, because their subjects bear no relation to each other, and therefore cannot properly be cited as examples to prove any inferiority in the inspired penmen.

It only remains to produce a few instances, and to shew that the Scripture style, in spite of all such disadvantages, is superior to the style of

either of the three great masters of the sublime, HOMER, VIRGIL, and MILTON.

As a standard for determining the truth of this position, we shall use Dr. Blair's principles of "mighty force and power,"* together with "simplicity of style,"† and Longinus' rule for judging of the sublime.‡ We have a conspicuous exemplification of these rules in this remarkable passage—"And God said, let there be light, and there was light." Indeed the whole chapter represents God as speaking all creation into existence.

Homer, when representing an engagement of the gods, describes the effect of Neptune's power thus:—

Εδδεισεν δ' υπεερθεν αναξ ενερων Αιδωνευς,
Δεισας δ' εκ θρονου αλτο, και ιαχε μη οι υπερθε
Γαιαν αναρρηξειε Ποσειδαων.§

Deep in the dismal regions of the dead,
Th' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head,
Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arms should lay
His dark dominions open to the day.—POPE.

But how infinitely transcendant is the description of the Deity's descent upon Mount Sinai, as recorded in the book of Exodus—"And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."

Again Neptune's might is exhibited in the following manner:—

— αυταρ ενερθε Ποσειδαων ετιναξε
Γαιαν απειρεσινη, ορεων τ αιπεινα καρηνα.
Παντες δ' εσσειοντα ποδες πολυπηδακου Ιδης,
Και κορυφαι, Τρωων τε πολις, και νηες Αχαιων.||

Beneath, stern Neptune shakes the solid ground,
The forests wave, the mountains nod around;
Through all their summits tremble Ida's woods,
And from their sources boil their hundred floods.

* Lect. 3.

† Lect. 4.

‡ De Sublim. Sect. 9.

§ Iliad. lib. 20. i. 63.

|| Iliad. lib. 20. l. 63.

Troy's turrets totter on the rocking plain ;
And the toss'd navies beat the heaving main.——POPE.

Observe the exalted language of the Psalmist—"The heathen raged ; the kingdoms were moved ; he uttered his voice ; the earth melted ; the earth shook ; the heavens also dropped at the presence of God ; the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord." And how unspeakably superior to any thing which we find in profane authors are such strong, majestic descriptions of God as the following—"He walketh upon the wings of the wind ; extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH !"

Virgil, in painting a storm, speaks of Jupiter thus :—

*Ipsè pater, media nimborum in nocte, corusca .
Fulmina molitur dextra ; quo maxima motu,
Terra tremuit, fugere feræ, et mortalia corda,
Per gentes humilis stravit pavor.**

The father of the gods his glory shrouds ;
Involv'd in tempests and a night of clouds ;
And from the middle darkness flashing out,
By fits he deals his fiery bolts about.
Earth feels the motions of her angry God,
Her entrails tremble, and her mountains nod,
And flying harts in forests seek abode :
Deep horror seizes every human breast,
Their pride is humbled, and their fear confest.——DRYDEN.

But hear the Psalmist :—"The glory of God thundereth ; the voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness ; the Lord also thundereth in the heavens. Then the channels of the waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils."

Virgil, speaking of the war-horse, says,

*Collectamque premens volvitur sub naribus ignem—
Carpere prata fuga.†*

But who can avoid calling Virgil's descriptions childish, when contrasted with this sublime piece of poetry from Job, the beauties of which are so uncommonly striking, that to omit it would be inexcusable ! "Hast thou given the horse strength ; hast thou clothed his neck with thunder ; canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper ? The glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength ; he goeth on to meet the armed men ; he mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear, and the shield ; he swalloweth the ground in fierceness and rage, neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, ha, ha ; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting."

* Geo. lib. 1. l. 322.

† Geo. lib. 8. l. 35, 142.

Once more, to instance from Milton—

How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark, does heaven's all ruling sire
Choose to reside ; his glory unobscured ;
And with the majesty of darkness, round
Covers his throne.

Observe the Psalmist's expression—"He made darkness his secret place ; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the sky."

Milton introduces Satan speaking to one of the fallen angels thus :—

O how fallen ! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy realms of light,
Cloth'd with transendant brightness, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright !

Still stronger is the language of the prophet Isaiah—"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning ! How art thou cut down which didst weaken the nations ! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven ; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God ; I will be like the MOST HIGH."

Neither ancient nor modern writers can produce a similar instance of the sublime, equal to the following passage of Job. "In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face ; the hair of my flesh stood up ; it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof ; an image was before mine eyes. There was silence ; and I heard a voice, shall mortal man be more just than God."

An attempt to illustrate such effusions of the sublime, would both enfeeble the thought, and degrade the style. They carry with them resistless impressions of superior majesty. These are but a small portion of that astonishing variety with which the sacred volume is replete. Our circumscribed limits would admit of no large selections. The instances cited are, however, sufficient to prove, that the style of Scripture far excels the style of every other author. Indeed, such rays of glory are reflected from each inspired page, and burst with such energy upon the mind of an impartial reader, that he cannot but confess, "there is here a *nameless something* more than human."

J.

New-Haven, 1821.



Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth ;
keep the door of my lips Ps. cxli. 3

It is deeply to be regretted that among the various duties to which we are summoned by our religion, the government of the tongue should not be made an object of more at-

tention. If Christianity is indeed a pure and holy principle, destined to exercise a corresponding influence on the life and conversation of its possessor, it is difficult to say, why its effects should not appear, in correcting the natural asperities of the temper, and restraining the tongue from

giving utterance to illiberal and censorious opinions. It is not my intention to enlarge on the evils which result to society from a disposition to free remark, which seems to be inherent in the human constitution—they have been a thousand times exposed by the preacher and the moralist; and so perfectly do they approve themselves to the common observation of men, as to leave no room for skepticism. In a world lying in wickedness, we have no hope, that the disposition towards evil speaking will be adequately restrained, till all men have been subdued into acquiescence to the law of that charity, which “thinketh no evil;”—in other words, till the spirit of pure and undefiled religion shall reign in all hearts. It has shot too deep a root among the ruins of the fall, to be eradicated by any agent less active and powerful than religion—it is too stubborn to relent before the suggestions of prudence, or a regard to the repose of society. I despair of ever seeing an effectual remedy applied, till I see the mild and forbearing spirit of piety completely triumphant throughout the world.

The following remarks are more particularly designed for the eye of those, who bear the name of professed followers of the Lamb, and have witnessed before men and angels “a good confession.” Surely, we have a right to look for an anxious government of the tongue amongst the avowed imitators of Him, “who knew no sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth.” We expect, that in striving to “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,” they will guard severely against the indulgence we are exposing—that they will “keep the door of their lips” when temptations to unjust censure are thrown in their way.

May it not be questioned, however, whether Christians are sufficiently careful in this particular? Is it

not too often true, that the restraint of the tongue is one of the last attainments of professing Christians? Or rather, is there not found this inherent defect in the religion of many, that the propensity to evil speaking has not been in the smallest degree subdued by it? “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;” and there must certainly be a radical deficiency in the righteousness of him, who unnecessarily arraigns the motives, and uncharitably interprets the actions of his fellow-travellers in the way.

A more intimate acquaintance with the character which falls under our animadversions, has frequently issued in the conviction, that our censures were most unjust. He who is accustomed to speak with freedom, without an intimate knowledge of the censured person, will often see reason to recal his unfavourable judgment as his knowledge increases, and at last to be heartily ashamed of his work. The fallaciousness of *common report* has been too often experienced to be admitted as a sufficient guide in forming our opinions; and who has not been led by it to cherish sentiments, which he has afterwards seen reason to regret?

The evil we are deprecating is never seen in a more odious and revolting shape, than when it is exemplified in the lives of persons who have made a profession of piety, and from whom we are taught to look for better things. There is all the force of violent contrast, between the forbearing spirit of the religion, and the discordant tenor of the practice, to impress us. It is so contrary to the letter and spirit of the Gospel, that we hazard nothing in saying, that the heart cannot be truly turned to God, which indulges without restraint in uncharitable sentiments, and censorious remarks. The habit, I fear, is but too common amongst persons of avowed piety; and so far

has the delusion been sometimes indulged, that natural intolerance of disposition has even been *increased*, in proportion to the supposed accumulation of christian gifts and graces. The mistaken piety of some has seemed to confer on its possessors the privilege of sitting in judgment on the spiritual state of their brethren, and of assuming that knowledge of the heart, which has been supposed to belong only to Omniscience. Exclusive systems of religion may have some influence in cherishing this spirit; but the root of the evil is to be found in that narrow and intolerant bigotry, which is the property of weak and uncultivated minds. It is engendered by ignorance, and nursed by spiritual pride. Every friend of religion must regret the injury it has received at the hands of such mistaken pietists, and be often led to wish, that the line which separates the genuine from the false in practice, could be made more palpable to human vision—that those errors which have their real origin in the unsubdued corruption of the heart, might not be received by the adversaries of Christianity, as the legitimate fruits of Christian faith.

Intelligent and observing men have remarked, that the atmosphere of a country village is peculiarly unfavourable to the growth of christian charity; and that the government of the tongue is a more difficult administration amongst small collections of men, than in larger communities. I know not what degree of credit is due to the opinion; but assuming it to be well founded, I apprehend the fact may be readily accounted for, without supposing the existence of any peculiar depravity. The inhabitants of an insulated village, living much within themselves, and holding little converse with any part of this wide world save that which lies within the prospect of their own dwellings, are apt to make amends

for their circumscribed knowledge, by a minute acquaintance with the domestic occurrences in their own immediate neighbourhood: Each claims as an indisputable right, the privilege of looking into the private affairs of his acquaintance, and hence the transactions of every individual, whether good or evil, become the legitimate property of the town. Fame lifts her trumpet, and makes public proclamation in the streets—scandal is busy from house to house—what one reports as a probable surmise, another retails as a well ascertained certainty—the customary additions and embellishments are supplied, and characters are laid in ruins. A wider intercourse with the world would supply a partial correction of the evil, by presenting other subjects of comment than the usual topics of village scandal; but religion alone can furnish an adequate remedy.—Are we not entitled to look among the professed disciples of Christianity, for the trophies of its purifying and reforming power? We should suppose that the principles of a widely diffused christian profession would triumph over the native selfishness and malignity of the human heart—that men would be less employed in exploring a neighbour's deficiencies, and more, in discovering their own—that each would descend into the dark “chambers of imagery” in his own breast, detecting greater and greater abominations, till the whole were brought out and slain before the Lord. We should expect, that when Religion came forth to shed over a neighbourhood her select influences, and multiply the monuments of her power, she would be accompanied in her descent by her handmaid Charity, “rejoicing in the truth,” hushing the angry noise of contention, and promoting peace and good will between man and man. Genuine piety is known by its fruits; and no delusion is more fatal, than that of appealing to other tests of its existence,

which have no relation to the government of the temper and the tongue. He cannot be truly "born of God," whatever *experience* he may be able to relate, whose temper has undergone no material change from what it was before. That he has transferred his censures exclusively to the aberrations of religious people, is no evidence of his piety. The instances I fear are too common, in which all the original bitterness of the heart is retained after a supposed conversion; and instead of *putting away* all wrath, and clamour, and evil speaking, as the Apostle directs, they have been mingled in strange combination with the many prayers, and the fondness for hearing sermons, and all the usual outward marks of a christian profession. These things ought not so to be: they bring religion into contempt amongst the worldly, and give occasion to its enemies to blaspheme. "If piety," say they, "can be productive of such fruits, we had better be without it. We shall at least be clear of the inconsistency of professing one thing, and practising another; and have the consolation of knowing, that if we make no elevated pretensions to superior godliness, our conduct does not belie our principles."

Would it not be well for the general interests of religion, if Christians of different denominations would endeavour to think better of each other? I am far from thinking that all our differences of opinion are to be merged in one wide sea of uniformity, nor would I recommend that any part of the stately fabric of our Church should be resigned, for the fluctuating tenets of our dissenting brethren. I would stand forth as the temperate and sincere, though feeble advocate of our moderate doctrines and discipline, as the best safeguard, under God, against Unitarianism on the one hand, and Antinomianism on the other—against a latitudinari-

an system of faith and morals, and the wildness of fanaticism. We will retain all the articles of our belief, because we are assured they are "contained in the Holy Scriptures, or may be proved thereby." What I would recommend is this,—that while we resign nothing of what we believe to be true, we should endeavour to cultivate feelings of amity and christian fellowship towards all the consistent followers of our common Lord; giving a charitable meaning at the same time to the actions of those, whose piety may seem to be doubtful. There are moderate and pious Christians in every communion, and there are noisy and boisterous professors: the former are entitled to our love; the latter to our charity. In most cases, there is no reason why we should accuse them of hypocrisy—they are sincere but misguided men, whose errors are best corrected by exhibiting towards them a spirit of forbearance.

It requires no small participation of "the mind which was in Christ Jesus," to enable his followers to walk consistently through this world, when a man's foes are too often those, who are nominally of the same household of faith. Their spirits will often be tried by perverseness, and their reputations assailed by evil tongues. But for the honour of religion, as well as for their own eternal good, they are bound to hold on their course, looking steadfastly through the mists and darkness of this world, to that city which hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God.—The world is passing away with all that is corrupt and disorderly in it; and the time is near, when it will be remembered by the faithful only as a troubled scene of preparation for a higher state, where "nothing can in any wise enter that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." S,

Extract from Paley's Natural Theology.

THE existence and character of the Deity is, in every view, the most interesting of all human speculations. In none, however, is it more so, than as it facilitates the belief of the fundamental articles of *Revelation*. It is a step to have it proved, that there must be something in the world more than what we see. It is a further step to know, that, amongst the invisible things of nature, there must be an intelligent mind, concerned in its production, order and support. These points being assured to us by Natural Theology, we may well leave to *Revelation* the disclosure of many particulars, which our researches cannot reach, respecting either the nature of this Being as the original cause of all things, or his character and designs as a moral governor; and not only so, but the more full confirmation of other particulars, of which, though they do not lie altogether beyond our reasonings and our probabilities, the certainty is by no means equal to the importance. The true Theist will be the first to listen to *any* credible communication of divine knowledge. Nothing which he has learned from Natural Theology, will diminish his desire of further instruction, or his disposition to receive it with humility and thankfulness. He wishes for light: he rejoices in light. His inward veneration of this great Being will incline him to attend with the utmost seriousness, not only to all that can be discovered concerning him by researches into nature, but to all that is taught by a revelation, which gives reasonable proof of having proceeded from him.

But, above every other article of revealed religion, does the anterior belief of a Deity bear with the strongest force upon that grand point, which gives indeed interest and importance to all the rest,—the resur-

rection of the human dead. The thing might appear hopeless, did we not see a power at work adequate to the effect, a power under the guidance of an intelligent will, and a power penetrating the inmost recesses of all substance. I am far from justifying the opinion of those, who "thought it a thing incredible, that God should raise the dead:" but I admit, that it is first necessary to be persuaded, that there is a God, to do so. This being thoroughly settled in our minds, there seems to be nothing in this process (concealed as we confess it to be,) which need to shock our belief. They who have taken up the opinion, that the acts of the human mind depend upon *organization*, that the mind itself indeed consists in organization, are supposed to find a greater difficulty than others do, in admitting a transition by death to a new state of sentient existence, because the old organization is apparently dissolved. But I do not see that any impracticability need be apprehended even by these; or that the change, even upon their hypothesis, is far removed from the analogy of some other operations, which we know with certainty that the Deity is carrying on. In the ordinary derivation of plants and animals from one another, a particle, in many cases, minuter than all assignable, all conceivable dimension determines the organization of a future body: does no less than fix, whether that which is about to be produced, shall be a vegetable, a merely sentient, or a rational being; an oak, a frog, or a philosopher; makes all these differences; gives to the future body its qualities, and nature, and species. And this particle, from which springs, and by which is determined a whole future nature, itself proceeds from, and owes its constitution to, a prior body: nevertheless, which is seen in plants most decisively, the incepted organization, though formed within,

and through, and by a preceding organization, is not corrupted by its corruption, or destroyed by its dissolution; but, on the contrary, is sometimes extricated and developed by those very causes; survives and comes into action, when the purpose, for which it was prepared, requires its use. Now an economy which nature has adopted, when the purpose was to transfer an organization from one individual to another, may have something analogous to it, when the purpose is to transmit an organization from one state of being to another state; and they who find thought in organization, may see something in this analogy applicable to their difficulties; for, whatever can transmit a similarity of organization will answer their purpose, because, according even to their own theory, it may be the vehicle of consciousness, and because consciousness carries identity and individuality along with it through all changes of form or of visible qualities. In the most general case, that, as we have said, of the derivation of plants and animals from one another, the latent organization is either itself similar to the old organization, or has the power of communicating to new matter the old organic form.—But it is not restricted to this rule. There are other cases, especially in the progress of insect life, in which the dormant organization does not much resemble that which incloses it, and still less suits with the situation in which the enclosing body is placed, but suits with a different situation to which it is destined. In the larva of an insect, which lives constantly, and has still long to live, under water, are described the wings of a fly, which two years afterwards is to mount into the air. Is there nothing in this analogy? It serves at least to shew, that even in the observable course of nature, organizations are formed one beneath another; and, amongst a thousand other

instances, it shews completely, that the Deity can mould and fashion the parts of material nature, so as to fulfil any purpose whatever which he is pleased to appoint.

They who refer the operations of mind to a substance totally and essentially different from matter, (as most certainly these operations, tho' affected by material causes, hold very little affinity to any properties of matter with which we are acquainted,) adopt perhaps a juster reasoning and a better philosophy; and by these the considerations above suggested are not wanted, at least in the same degree. But to such as find, which some persons do find, an insuperable difficulty in shaking off an adherence to those analogies, which the corporeal world is continually suggesting to their thoughts; to such, I say, every consideration will be a relief, which manifests the extent of that intelligent power which is acting in nature, the fruitfulness of its resources, the variety, and aptness, and success of its means—most especially every consideration, which tends to shew, that, in the translation of a conscious existence, there is not, even in their own way of regarding it, any thing greatly beyond, or totally unlike, what takes place in such parts (probably small parts) of the order of nature, as are accessible to our observation.

Again—if there be those who think, that the contractedness and debility of the human faculties in our present state, seem ill to accord with the high destinies which the expectations of religion point out to us, I would only ask them, whether any one, who saw a child two hours after its birth, could suppose that it would ever come to understand *fluxions*;* or who then shall say, what farther amplification of intellectual powers, what accession of knowledge, what advancement and improvement, the rational faculty, be

* See Search's Light of Nature, passim.

its constitution what it will, may not admit of, when placed amidst new objects, and endowed with a sensorium, adapted, as it undoubtedly will be, and as our present senses are, to the perception of those substances, and of those properties of things, with which our concern may lie.

Upon the whole; in every thing which respects this awful, but, as we trust, glorious change, we have a wise and powerful Being, (the author, in nature, of infinitely various expedients for infinitely various ends) upon whom to rely for the choice and appointment of means, adequate to the execution of any plan which his goodness or his justice may have formed, for the moral and accountable part of his terrestrial creation. That great office rests with *him*: be it *ours* to hope and to prepare, under a firm and settled persuasion, that, living and dying, we are his; that life is passed in his constant presence, that death resigns us to his merciful disposal.



*late
Bishop White*

The following vindication of the memory of Bishop SEABURY from the aspersions of Mr. Sharpe's biographer, we understand is from the pen of the venerable Bishop of Pennsylvania. It was published in the Christian Journal soon after the appearance of Mr. Hoare's book in this country; and from the well known accuracy of the writer, we doubt not it gives a correct representation of the facts relating to Bishop Seabury's application in London, which seem not to have been rightly apprehended by Mr. Sharpe and his biographer.

To the Editor of the Christian Journal.

November 13, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

THERE has lately reached this city, "Memoirs of the Life of Granville Sharpe, Esq." published in the

present year, by a gentleman of the name of Prince Hoare. His book will draw the attention of the American public, on account of the estimation in which the character of Mr. Sharpe has been held among us.—The veneration paid to his memory will be increased, by the hitherto unknown extent of his labours in the cause of suffering humanity. In short, the able work of Mr. Hoare will transmit the name of Mr. Sharpe to posterity, as one of the most efficient and meritorious characters of the present eventful age.

It is therefore lamented by your present correspondent, that on the 213th page of the said book, there should appear an unfavourable and erroneous representation of the character of the late Bishop Seabury, professed to be taken from the manuscripts of Mr. Sharpe. It is as follows:—

"Dr. Seabury, on coming to England, called on the Archbishop of Canterbury for consecration, to the great surprize of the Archbishop, who was apprehensive that it might give great offence to the Americans, with whom we had just then made peace; and, therefore, his Grace (the very worthy and learned Dr. Moore) wished to be allowed some time to consider of his request: upon which, Dr. Seabury very abruptly left the room, saying, if your Grace will not grant me consecration, I know where to obtain it; and immediately set off for Aberdeen."

Dr. Seabury arrived in London on the 7th of July, 1783, and did not set off for Aberdeen until a short time before his consecration, on the 14th of November, 1784. In the interval, he had considerable intercourse with the English prelaty, on the subject of his mission. This might be made to appear from sundry letters of his private correspondence, and by credible testimony of conversations held by him after his return. But the view shall be limit-

ed to his letters to the clergy of Connecticut, published in the Churchman's Magazine, in the year 1806.

It appears, that soon after his arrival, he first waited on the Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth; probably, because the Bishops of London had been diocesans of America. This Bishop "mentioned the state oaths in the ordination offices as impediments; but supposed, that the king's dispensation would be a sufficient warrant for the Archbishops to proceed on." Thus writes Dr. Seabury, and then adds—"But upon conversing with his Grace of Canterbury, I found his opinion rather different from the Bishop of London. He received me politely, approved of the measure, saw the necessity of it, and would do all he could to carry it into execution. But he must proceed openly, and with candour. His majesty's dispensation, he feared, would not be sufficient to justify the omission of oaths imposed by act of Parliament. He would consult the other Bishops; he would advise with those persons, on whose judgment he thought he could depend. He was glad to hear the opinion of the Bishop of London, and wished to know the sentiments of the Archbishop of York. He foresaw great difficulties, but hoped they were none of them insurmountable."

It was highly indecorous, if Dr. Seabury, after such a reception, abruptly left the room, first having threatened the Archbishop with an application to Scotland, and immediately proceeding to carry the threat into effect.

But, on recourse to his letter of the 16th of August, 1783, the following facts appear. Dr. Seabury repaired to York, on a visit to the Archbishop of that province, to whom the application from Connecticut had been addressed, in consequence of the decease of Archbishop Cornwallis; the promotion of Dr. Moore to the primacy not being known in America.

There ensued a correspondence between the two Archbishops. Difficulties occurred: among which, as appears from Mr. Hoare's book, (p. 231,) was the opposition of the Lord Chancellor; whose opinion, as he was Speaker of the House of Lords, would of course have great weight. Dr. Seabury, seeing no end of the negociation, after a stay of more than a year, repaired to Scotland.

The result of these facts is the conviction, that there must have been a misunderstanding in the mind of that excellent man—Mr. Sharpe. It does not appear, that the business of Dr. Seabury was known to him, until after it was over. He entertained sentiments unfavourable to the Scottish Episcopacy. Now, altho' there was no ground on which the Episcopal Church in America, severed as it had become from England, could reject a succession from this source; allowance should be made for the scruples of a loyal Englishman, in relation to a College of Bishops still dependent for the exercise of their function on a Pretender to the British crown: for this was considered by Mr. Sharpe as their situation in the very case of Dr. Seabury, as appears on the 212th page of the biography. The mind of Mr. Sharpe being in this state, it is no injury to his memory to suppose, that he may have misapprehended the narrative of the interview in question, even if it came to him from his Grace of Canterbury. This, however, does not appear in the extract from the manuscript, but is added by Mr. Hoare.

It ought not to be deemed indelicate to the latter gentleman, to suppose that he may have misapprehended in this instance; it having certainly happened to him in another; where he says (page 230) concerning the two Bishops, consecrated on the 4th of February, 1787, that they had been introduced to the Archbishop by Mr. Sharpe. It ap-

pears from a late work entitled "Memoirs of the Episcopal Church," and written by one of these Bishops, that they were introduced by his excellency John Adams, Esq. then Minister at the Court of Great-Britain.

On the opposite page to that the last referred to, there is an error, which ought to be here corrected. It seems to have been reported from this side of the Atlantic, and believed on the other, that the Episcopal Convention, assembled in Philadelphia in 1785, consisted of "Presbyterians and other dissenters." There was not an individual of that body, who was any other than a member of the Episcopal Church.

After discharge of a debt to private character, something seems due to historic truth.

So far as regards the operations of Mr. Sharpe in favour of American Episcopacy, the first fact within the knowledge of those who moved in the business in this country, was his letter to a Baptist minister (Dr. Manning,) handed about among the members of the Convention of 1785, but not submitted to that body. The next, was extracts of letters of Mr. Sharpe to the Archbishop of Canterbury, communicated to Dr. Franklin, and by him sent, in 1786, to the author of the "Memoirs of the Episcopal Church." The two Bishops, who were soon after consecrated in England, uniformly testified to the kind reception of them by Mr. Sharpe, and to his zeal in their business. These things fall short of what is contained in the biography: for there it is stated, that a book published by him in 1777, gave a beginning to designs in favour of Episcopacy, and this, with the aid of the people called Quakers; that the same book had convinced a large body of dissenters as well as churchmen in the United States, of the propriety of establishing Episcopacy among themselves; and that even

during the war, a motion had been made in Congress for the purpose, and was postponed, merely because a time of peace would be the most proper. There must have been some such accounts transmitted, but the matters were unknown to those, who had an agency in organizing the Episcopal Church.

They were equally strangers to the alterations in the Liturgy projected in 1689, under a commission from the Crown, by a body of eminent divines, one of whom was the excellent grandfather of Mr. Sharpe, soon after Archbishop of York.—They could not but know of the commission, and of the disappointment of the object of it. But they had not access, as Mr. Sharpe supposed, (page 229) to the projected alterations.

On the ground of historic truth, something is due to a society extraneous to the Episcopal Church.—The biographer of Granville Sharpe was far from entertaining the design of detracting from the merits of the people called Quakers, in the work of the abolition of slavery. In the said respectable society, it began in 1754. There has been no relaxation of the system, although, occasionally, and for a while, the arm of discipline was stretched over members refractory in this respect. This happened in 1758, and afterwards, in 1773. Since the latter period, the submission has been universal. And yet Mr. Hoare, intending to do the society honour, but falling short of his object, says—"The year 1787, in which the Committee was appointed in England for the promoting the abolition of the slave trade, was the first year distinguished in America by the gratifying circumstance of their not remaining a single slave in the possession of an acknowledged Quaker." This is stated as the effect of a general manumission taking place in that year.

The above, gentlemen Editors, is from one of your subscribers and readers.

VINDEK.



Address of Bishop Moore, at the conclusion of the Convention of North-Carolina.

(Extract from the Minutes.)

BRETHREN,

THE prospect of success which gradually unfolds itself to our view, in the advancement of the interests of the Church, is truly encouraging. We have hitherto met with no difficulties to retard our progress; no untoward event to paralyze our minds; no afflicting circumstance to excite a desponding fear. Our path has been rendered clear by the pointings of Providence, and the most animating light has been reflected upon it by that God, in whose service we are engaged.

When we consider the depressed circumstances under which the Episcopal Church in North-Carolina laboured, at the period in which the attempt to revive its interests first commenced, we must be aware of those effects, of which the least check to our exertions would have been productive. Although the union into which the friends of our communion entered was ardent and sincere, still as the object they had in view was of greater importance, and the number of those who sustained the ark was very small, difficulties which would have been disregarded by a larger body, would not only have shaken the hopes of the chosen few, but prostrated their best efforts in the dust; and produced a relinquishment of the concern, in which they had so nobly engaged. The Almighty in tender mercy has subjected us to the effects of no such discouragements. In every step we have taken, we have been sustained by his benevolent arm: a

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pillar of light has shown us the way in which to proceed: obstructions have been removed: the mountains of difficulty have been made easy for the passage of his Church and people: friends have been raised up for our support: the different societies of Christians have received us with open arms, and have wished us success in the name of the Lord.

These considerations have made an impression upon my mind, which no circumstances can ever efface; and I rejoice that the Almighty God has made choice of me to assist you in the work, and to aid you in the resuscitation of this portion of his vineyard.

To ensure success to your farther efforts, I would urge you to persevere in the same course of conduct, you have hitherto pursued. As long as the clergy continue to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, Jehovah will continue to bless their labours. As long as the laity follow Christ and obey his precepts, Jehovah will own them as his servants. Marked with the features of the cross—making mention of the righteousness of Christ, and of his only, we shall be universally acknowledged as the friends of that Being who died on Calvary, and is risen from the dead.

The proposition which has been made to this Convention, by a portion of the Lutheran Church in this State, is calculated to excite our warmest gratitude to God: it proclaims in language which cannot be misunderstood, the confidence they place in our integrity, and the preference they give to our religious institutions. The door which has been opened for the reception of the messenger into our bosom, which conveyed to us their proposals, forms an event of the most imposing character. In a point, from which we apprehended some difficulty, there has no difficulty arisen; and we have sent him back to the people of his

charge, clothed with that ministerial authority required by our communion, our fellow-labourer in the Gospel—our friend—our brother.

If the Lutheran ministers and congregations, by whom he has been deputed to attend upon our proceedings, breathe the same sentiments which warm my heart—if they possess the same desire to effect as perfect and entire an union, as hath been exemplified in their representative, it cannot be long before that union will be completed. We shall then form one fold under one shepherd—meet around the same altar—constitute one household, Jesus Christ himself the Bishop of our souls.

On my way to the Convention, I preached in Warrenton to a large congregation, and confirmed ten persons. Since the present session of the Convention in Raleigh commenced, I have ordained three Deacons, and admitted one of the number to the Priesthood: I have confirmed forty-nine persons—baptized twenty-five children, and administered the Lord's Supper to many of the followers of the Saviour, belonging to the various congregations in this place. Brethren of the Clergy and Laity—accept the assurances of my great respect and regard. I wish you a happy interview with your families, and may the Lord be with you.

RICHARD CHANNING MOORE.



From the Christian Guardian.

On Church Music.

MR. GUARDIAN,

As singing forms so essential a part of public worship, and is so clearly and decidedly enforced in various parts of Scripture, both by precept and example, I have often tho't it might not be either unnecessary or unprofitable, were a *little* more attention paid to this particular department of divine worship. It would

be quite needless, and out of place here, for me to enquire of the propriety of introducing instrumental music into our divine services. Let every one as to that be satisfied according to his own conscience, as in every other particular should be the case. For my own part I confess, that as it is introduced into our Church, as a member thereof I feel bound both by duty and principle to acknowledge her forms as well as her doctrines; and happy, Mr. Guardian, for my peace of mind, I can conscientiously bow to both. That singing, under the Old Testament dispensation, ranked highly in the ordinances of religion, every one acquainted with his Bible will allow; and that instrumental music was then its usual concomitant, is equally obvious. Without staying to enquire, whether it be expedient still to continue the latter practice, I hasten to lay before you as a sentiment deeply engraven on my mind, "that where instrumental music is introduced, it should be good." The word *good*, a celebrated writer* has observed, differs much in signification, according either to the purpose employed in, or the places spoken of: thus, to be good in the camp, would imply to be brave; and so in the city, to be rich; therefore, when I use the term *good*, be it remembered, I am speaking of a church; and I certainly do not mean to apply to the votaries of the ball-room, or the frequenters of the theatre for a definition, but conceive it should be adapted to the place and service. That many of our churches are defective in this point, must, I think, be allowed in the drawling notes of many a psalm tune; so, on the other hand, the brisk allegretto—I rather doubt if

"Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,"
can

"Make the soul dance upon a jig to heaven."

The middle course is the best, says the proverb; therefore let the

* Dr. Johnson.

medium be observed. I do not know that I can better enforce my position than in the relation of an anecdote which I know to be well authenticated, and which, as it happened in a chapel of the Establishment where both instrumental and vocal music were used, and which did at that time (though certainly now greatly failing in this respect) rank highly for the sublimity and beauty of this part of the service. It having, I say, happened here, serves to illustrate, I think, what I have adduced—that good singing and *good* playing, where an organ is introduced, forms an essential part of divine service, in public worship, and, at least in this one instance, have proved a means of grace.

A Mr. A. having been induced by a female friend to accompany her to the above-mentioned chapel, was at his entrance much struck by an hymn which was then being sung by the whole congregation, the sublimity of which both in words and composition much affected him.* He perused the words, which appeared of a peculiar force in the manner they were sung, as he confessed by turning to his friend and saying, "Ah, Mary, this is what I want!" He was now easily prevailed upon to stay for the sermon; and the place being blessed also with a Gospel minister, the Lord was pleased to bless it to his soul. Conviction ensued—he fled to Jesus—he lived a Christian—he died triumphant! and the very last words he uttered were from the hymn alluded to; to which he always looked as to the first means which God was pleased to bless to his soul.

Mr. Guardian, this is not a solitary instance. Those feelings which by a scoffing world are deemed enthusiastic, but which the Christian knows well how to appreciate, are

they not often excited by the blessed Spirit through the medium of this exalted act of worship? As Paul and Silas sung praises, the prison-doors were opened, the chains wherewith they were bound fell to the ground, and they were liberated. I would that some able pen would take up the subject, that justice might be done it. For my own part, I have been induced to say thus much, partly because the subject, though universally complained of, is not attempted to be remedied, as I can see, and partly because I have witnessed in some parts of the country a shameful disregard to this part of worship, by its not being once introduced into their service. This fact, I think, cannot be generally known, especially to the heads of our Church, or surely it would not be allowed.

I remain, Mr. Guardian,

Your constant reader,

MEZZOPIANO.

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Retreat for the Insane.

The Committee appointed by the late Convention of the President and Fellows of the Connecticut Medical Society, for the purpose of collecting information respecting the number and condition of the Insane in this State, and of devising a plan for a hospital for the retreat and recovery of such patients, take this occasion to request the co-operation and support of their medical brethren, the Clergy of the several denominations, and all the benevolent and compassionate, who feel an interest in the welfare of this unfortunate class of human beings.

The present is eminently an age for religious, charitable, and humane institutions. Such enterprizes, at the present day, are crowned with a success hitherto unparalleled in the history of the world. Indeed so well are these subjects understood, as to

* The hymn was, "Jesus, lover of my soul," &c. I am unacquainted with the author of the pious effusion of soul therein contained.

be almost reduced to the certainty of a science. When any new establishment is demanded, its utility and importance need only be made to appear, and the benevolence of the public places the means within our reach. The ardour which has been universally shown for meliorating the condition of the sick and destitute, for extending the blessings of civilization, knowledge, and the arts, to distant savage and pagan nations, and for the general diffusion of Christianity, by means of missions, schools, and the circulation of the Scriptures, has been prospered beyond the most sanguine expectations.

But while devoted to these truly great and laudable undertakings, we have hitherto neglected all effectual means of mitigating the evils of one of the most frequent and distressing calamities to which the human race is subject. Certainly the loss of reason is to be contemplated as pre-eminent in the catalogue of human afflictions. The number of the insane, the hopelessness of recovery under ordinary means, and the misery resulting both to the sufferers and their friends, are far beyond the conception of those, who have not paid particular attention to the subject. If any reliance can be placed upon an estimate, made from some individual towns, there must exist at this time, between two and three thousand insane persons, within the limits of this State. But making all the allowances, which it is hoped further returns may justify, there must certainly be more than one thousand proper candidates for a retreat for the insane.

The utility of the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, is universally acknowledged. Its success has exceeded the expectations of its warmest friends, and it promises to be—indeed it is already—ranked among the most valuable institutions of the State. Six years ago, the project for this Asylum was attended with vastly greater difficulties, than can

now attend that under consideration. It is believed, as in that case, that the public need only be informed of the utility and practicability of the measure, to be induced to carry it into speedy effect. There are certainly twenty, and probably more insane persons, to one that is deaf and dumb. There is not a single argument in favour of an Asylum for this last mentioned class, which will not apply with tenfold greater force, in favour of an institution for reclaiming the insane. Neither the deaf and dumb, nor their friends, are necessarily unhappy. The most forcible arguments in favour of their cause, the opportunity of affording them moral and religious instruction, it is obvious, will apply to a much greater extent, in the present instance, as the number of subjects is greater.

“If the mind shrinks for a moment at the aspect of this terrible disease, which seems calculated to humble the reason of man, it must afterwards feel pleasing emotions, in considering all that ingenious benevolence has (in other countries) been able to invent, to cure and comfort the patients afflicted with this malady.”

Had it not been for the oversight and neglect of our predecessors, two thirds of all our maniacs might, long ago, have been restored to society. For want of a suitable institution, they are now, nearly all, for ever lost—and not merely lost, but they remain living monuments of the deepest distress and misery, not only of themselves, but of all around them.

The truth is, insanity is a disease, which it is impossible to manage with much success, in private practice. Suitable treatment requires peculiar talents, which are far from being universally or even commonly possessed, and it requires that there should be physicians and attendants exclusively devoted to the patients, and that the patients themselves

should be in a situation favourable for carrying the proper medication into effect.

In private families, there is no opportunity of employing that moral regimen, which is so indispensable in the management of every disease of the mind. In many instances, by suitable address alone, the peculiar hallucination, which constitutes the disease, may be removed, and the patient restored without a particle of medicine. To ensure success however, it is absolutely necessary, that the insane should be committed to the charge of strangers. Parents and heads of families, who have been in the habit of commanding, and being obeyed, by children and domestics, can never be adequately controlled by them, nor can friends and neighbours interpose with much better effect. In fact it is often a cause of the continuance, and one of the greatest aggravations of the disease, that the maniac is sensible, that he has lost his influence over his family and friends, and that he finds he has forfeited their confidence. Hence, in private practice, chains, and even more severe coercion, are frequently indispensable; but, in a proper retreat, the insane are protected from the ill judged severity, and unavoidable neglect, even of their nearest connexions: for strange as it may seem, it will be found, on examination, that from ignorance of the real nature of the disease, friends usually confound the misconduct of the patient, with original perversity of temper.

In addition to the essential improvement of the situation of the patient, a hospital produces incalculable relief to the friends. A thousand maniacs diffused through the State, infallibly draw into the vortex of misery, three or four thousand of their connexions.

In a well regulated hospital, two thirds at least, of all the recent cases, are recovered, and restored to society. It is very questionable, whether

private practice can boast of a tenth of this number. It is consequently the greatest humanity to the patients, as well as their friends—nay, true benevolence imperatively demands us to provide such a retreat.

A hospital is the only place that affords means of improvement in the management of the insane, and the only place where practitioners can be trained to competent skill. In a hospital, the aggregate expense of attendance, support, and medical treatment, is much less than in private practice. When a public institution is once established, and has commenced operation, it promises, very nearly, to support itself, as the rich have the same inducement to send their insane friends as the poor, and as towns can send their insane paupers, with less expense than they can support them at home.

The neglect which this subject has hitherto received in this State, can be accounted for upon no other principle, than that the mind becomes callous to the evils which are constantly within its sight. With the warmest wishes for the success of every other benevolent institution, we fondly flatter ourselves, that the time has arrived, when every object of humanity will have its due weight in our hearts, and receive its full proportion of our charities. Surely there can be nothing necessary, but a proper diffusion of information, with respect to the quantum of misery, endured by this forlorn class of human beings, together with the practicability of so great an alleviation, in order to induce the public as readily to found and endow an institution of this kind, as to engage in any one of the charities which are already so cheerfully and bountifully supported.

The Committee have no other interest in the furtherance of this design, than that which is common to every citizen. Notwithstanding the necessary expense of time and money, they have gratuitously undertaken to meet monthly, till the next

session of the Medical Convention. Under these circumstances, they confidently call upon every class of people, for their zealous co-operation. The acknowledged influence which physicians, the clergy of the several denominations, and the editors of newspapers, have in their respective spheres, very obviously designate them, as among the most proper persons to make applications to, upon every subject of benevolence and humanity, and more especially upon a subject of such deep interest to every one, and which involves the happiness of such numbers of the community.

THOMAS MINER,	} Committee.
ELI TODD,	
S. B. WOODWARD,	
WILLIAM TULLY,	
GEORGE SUMNER,	

Hartford, 22d May, 1821.

Report of the General Convention,
ON THE STATE OF THE CHURCH.

(Continued.)

NEW-JERSEY.

THE state of the Church, in the diocese of New-Jersey, through the divine goodness, still continues, however slowly, to improve.

Though there has been but one addition to the number of congregations, since the last report, (the Church at Patterson) yet there has been an increase of members and of communicants, in several. More clergymen now belong to the diocese, and possess cures, than at any former period. The Churches, with scarcely an exception, are in excellent repair. One of which, St. Michael's Church, at Trenton, has been lately rebuilt, in an elegant style, and others have been improved and repaired. The vacant Churches have enjoyed the regular administration of the word and ordinances, more frequently than formerly. They have been annually visited by the Bishop,

some of them oftener; several of them by the rectors in their vicinity; and all of them, by missionaries.—There is, therefore, cause for gratitude to the Divine Head of the Church, that, struggling with difficulties and discouragements, as our section of it has been for many years, we are yet permitted not only to live, but to anticipate, with considerable confidence, a still better state of our ecclesiastical affairs.

Since the preceding General Convention, the Bishop of the diocese has admitted to priests' orders, the Rev. James Montgomery, formerly a deacon, in the diocese of Pennsylvania; and to deacon's orders, Samuel Brighton Stratton, (since removed to Maryland,) Francis H. Cumming, (since removed to the diocese of York,) George H. Woodruff, and Clarkson Dunn.

Two institutions have taken place within the same time, the Rev. James Montgomery, to the rectorship of St. Michael's Church, Trenton, (since removed to the diocese of New-York,) and the Rev. Abiel Carter, lately of the diocese of Pennsylvania, to the same rectorship.

Two candidates for holy orders have been admitted.

Confirmations have been administered in eight churches. The number confirmed was one hundred and fifty-three. The number of baptisms reported, since the last General Convention, is four hundred and eighty-two, and the present number of communicants, upwards of eight hundred. The rubrics and canons of the Church are generally observed with attention, and the authority of the Church respected.

The funds of the corporation for the relief of widows and children of clergymen of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this State; of the Episcopal Society for promoting Christian knowledge and piety; and the fund for supporting missionaries, have increased considerably since the last report. The permanent

fund of the Episcopal Society has advanced from four hundred and seventy-five, to upwards of eight hundred dollars; at the same time, a very considerable number of bibles, prayer-books, and religious tracts have been gratuitously distributed by the society, among the needy members of the Church, and others.

The number of instituted rectors in the diocese, is nine. The whole number of clergymen, fifteen; three more than were reported at the last meeting.

PENNSYLVANIA.

There are, at this time, in the state of Pennsylvania, thirty clergymen of the Episcopal Church; the greater part of whom are engaged in the discharge of parochial duty.

The following persons have been ordained deacons, in this diocese, since the last General Convention: Richard S. Mason, William A. Muhlenberg, Henry R. Judah, Samuel C. Brinckle, Manning B. Roche, Thomas Breintnall, William Westerman, Joseph Spencer, John Rodney, Bird Wilson, William S. Wilson, Charles G. Snowden, John Johns, Samuel Bacon, Henry Pfeiffer, and Samuel Sitgreaves, jun.

The following deacons have been ordained priests: the Rev. George Sheets, the Rev. Albert A. Muller, of South-Carolina, the Rev. Jacob M. Douglass, the Rev. Charles M. Dupuy, the Rev. Thomas P. May, the Rev. Frederick Dalcho, M. D. of South-Carolina, the Rev. John V. E. Thorn, the Rev. Bird Wilson, and the Rev. Samuel Bacon.

There are, at present, the following candidates for orders in this diocese: Samuel Marks, Charles P. McIlvaine, Ephraim Bacon, James Doughen, John B. Bankson, Robert Piggot, Richard H. Morgan, Joseph Mason, Peter Van Pelt.

This diocese has been deprived by death, of the Rev. Absalom Jones,

the Rev. Thomas P. May, and the Rev. John Campbell.

St. Thomas's Church, Whitmarsh, St. Luke's Church, Germantown, and Christ Church, Leacock, Lancaster county, have been consecrated by the Bishop.

New churches are erecting at Lancaster, Easton, and Mantua.

Four recently organized parishes have been received into union with the Convention of the diocese.

The number of baptisms since the last General Convention, has been one thousand six hundred and sixty-eight, and of confirmations, seven hundred and twenty-four. The number of communicants reported to the last diocesan Convention, is one thousand five hundred.

From the representations of the missionaries who are sent out under the patronage of the Society for the advancement of Christianity in Pennsylvania, the agreeable intelligence is derived, that a degree of religious sensibility is perceptible among the members of our communion generally, and an attachment to the distinctive principles of our Church, which, it is hoped, will, in time, lead to the most beneficial results. Under the influence of this pious zeal, the missionaries, who have been sent into the interior parts of the State, have been thankfully received and cordially welcomed; and under their labours, congregations have been collected and organized, which will soon be able to erect for themselves places of public worship, and support their pastors.

Societies have been established and respectably supported, for Sunday school instruction, for distributing the Book of Common Prayer, and religious tracts. The Episcopal fund is rapidly increasing, and the corporation for the relief of widows and orphans of clergymen has an extensive fund which promises to answer the purposes of its establishment.

Upon the whole, it may be remarked, that the Church in Pennsylvania, under the blessing of her divine Founder and Head, is as rapid-

ly increasing in prosperity as, when all circumstances are considered, we have any reason to expect.

POETRY.

For the Churchman's Magazine.

David's Lamentation over Saul and Jonathan.

2 SAM. i 19-27.

I.

LET Israel weep
To the harp's wild strain—
In the battle slain,
Her heroes sleep;
On Gilboa's height,
Her beauty and might
Lie low 'mid the slaughter'd heap.

II.

Soft be our dirge and slow
Over the mighty dead—
Lest Gath catch the sound,
And publish around,
How Israel fled
Before the foe :—
Lest mirth and frantic laughter
Their triumph proclaim;
And Askelon's daughter
Exult in our shame.

III.

O mount of Gilboa, for ever
Thy summit be blasted and bare !
The rain and the dew may they never
To freshen thy herbage fall there !
Let no off'ring of praise
In gratitude rise ;
Nor on thy altars blaze
The evening sacrifice !
For slain by the foe,
They lie pale and low,
Israel's might and Israel's pride—
And Israel's virgin-daughters tell,
How in the battle's rage they fell,
Son and sire, side by side.

IV.

The eagle builds her nest in air,
And makes her pathway in the
sky ;

The savage lion quits his lair,
And roams to seek his prey.
But swifter than the eagle's flight,
Their feather'd arrows fly ;
More forceful than the lion's might,
They urge their rapid way—
Their vengeful enemies they slay—
The crimson current flows—
And in the blood of slaughter'd
foes,
Their temper'd swords they dye.

V.

Weep, Israel's daughter, weep !
In sadness veil thy head ;
Thy mightiest heroes sleep—
They sleep among the dead.
Put off thy robes of joy—
Let bitter tears be shed—
Let sackcloth o'er thy limbs be
spread,
And grief thy notes employ.
Wild be the strain, and deep,
That rolls on the list'ning ear ;
And let its melting murmurs sweep,
Above their untimely bier.

VI.

'Mid gasping warriors low,
In the scatter'd ranks of death,
The breast where love was wont to
glow
With more than female fire,
Lies pale and void of breath.
But hush the strain—unstring the
lyre—
The minstrel's voice be dumb ;
The quiv'ring chords in vain aspire
To wake the mighty from the tomb.

EREMUS.

New Haven, April 13, 1821.

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